

## Best practice potato seed treatment and handling

Potatoes

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Sourcing high quality, certified seed is an important step toward a successful potato crop. Inspect the quality of the seed and be prepared to source other seed if the quality does not meet your expectations.

Storage, handling and seed treatment are equally important in preserving the quality of your seed stock investment.

### Storage and handling

After the seed crop has been harvested, ensure the following:

- Cleanliness is paramount. Thoroughly clean the shed and grading equipment using a high-pressure steam washer or high-quality disinfectant. Care should also be taken to make sure bins are clean and free of debris and dirt.
- Good ventilation in storage sheds will help avoid undesirable physiological ageing of the seed. Physiological age of seed tubers determines when the buds will sprout and how many sprouts will develop from those buds. It also influences tuber development and can have a significant impact on tuber yield and size distribution.
- Disinfect all grading and cutting equipment prior to the download of potatoes each year. Disease carry-over from equipment can lead to tuber infection from pathogens such as *Fusarium* spp. and bacteria.

- After placing seed in cool storage, it's important to lower the temperature gradually. Half a degree Celsius per day is regarded as an ideal rate and a gradual reduction will lessen the chance of condensation. Ensure temperature and ventilation are maintained to avoid condensation.
- Monitor seed in storage and mark a date in your calendar to start warming up the seed to manage sprout growth. This will ensure the correct physiological age of the seed at planting.
- If you are cutting seed prior to planting, decide on the ideal seed piece size and monitor the cutter performance to ensure uniformity.

## Seed treatment

Tuber and soil-borne diseases can cause considerable crop losses and for this reason, a fungicide seed treatment offers vital protection prior to storage or planting.

Review the paddock history before planting. If the risk of soil-borne disease is high, the application of a seed treatment such as [VIBRANCE® PREMIUM](#) is recommended prior to storage or just prior to planting. The combination of a seed treatment with an in-furrow fungicide such as [AMISTAR® 250 SC](#), at planting, provides optimum disease control.

VIBRANCE PREMIUM protects against black scurf (*Rhizoctonia solani*), silver scurf (*Helminthosporium solani*), black dot (*Colletotrichum coccodes*), gangrene (*Phoma exigua*), fusarium dry rot (*Fusarium sulphureum*) and suppression of common scab (*Streptomyces scabies*) in potatoes.

From a resistance management perspective, VIBRANCE PREMIUM is an ideal option as it contains two active ingredients from two different fungicide mode of action groups.

When applying any seed treatment, it is important to use equipment that ensures even coverage of the tubers. Aim for application rates of between 1 to 3 litres/tonne seed of total solution (including the seed treatment). VIBRANCE PREMIUM should not be applied to sprouted seed which has sprouts greater than 3 mm in length as the wound can be more susceptible to disease.

For further information about fungicides and application advice, contact your local Syngenta representative.